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PRESS RELEASE

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District Woman Pleads Guilty to Conspiring to Steal United States and District of Columbia Treasury Checks from Mail

WASHINGTON – A 30-year-old District woman, Regina Q. Permenter, pleaded guilty today to one count of Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud for her role in a scheme to steal United States and District of Columbia treasury checks from the mail and cash them at local check-cashing establishments using fake identification documents, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced. Permenter entered her guilty plea in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before the Honorable John D. Bates.

Permenter is scheduled to be sentenced on October 7, 2010, and could face up to 10 months in prison under the voluntary Federal Sentencing Guidelines. As part of her plea, Permenter agreed to pay \$2,669.52 in restitution to the U.S. Treasury and \$989.21 to the District of Columbia Treasury.

According to evidence presented at the plea hearing, beginning in or about November 2008, and continuing until in or about October 2009, Permenter was involved with a number of other individuals in a scheme to take and steal the treasury checks from the custody and control of the United States Postal Service ("USPS") and, using fake and fraudulent identification documents, cash those checks at check-cashing establishments in the Washington, D.C. area by posing as the intended recipients.

Permenter was transported by a co-conspirator to a store where she had her photograph taken. That photograph was used to obtain false and fraudulent identification documents. These identification documents bore her photograph but the names and addresses of the intended recipients of stolen treasury checks.

As her part of the scheme, Permenter cashed or attempted to cash at least three stolen United States treasury checks and at least one stolen District of Columbia treasury check using false and fraudulent identification documents. Permenter received each of these checks on different dates from a co-conspirator. The checks had all been stolen from a USPS facility in Washington, D.C., by a USPS mail carrier. Permenter cashed or attempted to cash each check at one of three liquor stores in the District of Columbia.

In exchange for cashing these checks, Permenter was paid by a co-conspirator a portion of the face value of the checks. .

Altogether, Permenter and the other members of the stolen check scheme were responsible for the theft and fraudulent negotiation of over \$120,000 in stolen United States and District of Columbia treasury checks. Overall, more than 50 individuals and businesses were victimized by the scheme either because their mail was stolen or because they sustained an economic loss by cashing the checks.

In announcing today's guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the outstanding investigative work of agents of the USPS Office of Inspector General, Special Agent Derek Savoy of the District of Columbia Office of Inspector General, agents of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, agents of the U.S. Secret Service, and Detective Michael Pavero of the Metropolitan Police Department. U.S. Attorney Machen also praised the efforts of members of the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Legal Assistant Jamasee Lucas, Paralegal Specialists Sarah Reis and Mary Treanor, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ellen Chubin Epstein and David Johnson, who are prosecuting the case.

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